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ABSTRACT

A telephone survey was conducted to determine the number of lecture hours per week assigned by public two-year colleges as a normal full-time faculty workload. Telephone calls were made to the Academic Collective Bargaining Information Service, to the state administrators for two-year colleges, and to the chief academic offices of individual colleges. More than 70 officers cooperated in this study, providing information on 767 institutions. Workload information was gathered for all but four exceptional instructional situations: writing classes or other courses in which faculty were allowed exceptional amounts of time to devote to the evaluation of students' work; large classes for which special workload arrangements were made; classes in which unusual instructional strategies (e.g., computer-assisted instruction) required special workload allowances; and courses in which special workload arrangements were made because of team-teaching assignments. The survey revealed that of the 767 colleges, 702 assigned 15 lecture hours per week as the normal workload. Only 19 institutions assigned less than 15 hours, and only 39 colleges assigned normal workloads of more than 15 hours. The survey report discusses the rationale for choosing lecture hours, as opposed to other measurements, for use as a frame of reference in quantifying faculty productivity. (JP)

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CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MANAGEMENT REPORT

FACULTY WORKLOAD: FULL-TIME FACULTY
LECTURE HOUR WORKLOAD IN THE
CONTIGUOUS FORTY-EIGHT STATES

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Faculty Workload: Full-Time Faculty Lecture Hour Workload in the Contiguous Forty-Eight States

In his review of faculty workload, John Lombardi discussed the complexities of reporting the topic. Rather than deal with those complexities, the purpose of this study was to approach the matter from a single, seminal point.

Two possible focal points for the study were identified: the number of hours full-time faculty in community colleges work, and the lecture hour reference point used in most workload policies. The second choice was taken.

The choice not taken, the number of hours faculty work, was eliminated after review of studies which show that they freely claim to work at their jobs many hours more than a forty-hour week. Since most faculty report more hours worked than the minimum required by policy, there appeared to be no problem here worth a national study.

On the other hand, the amount of time full-time faculty spend in contact with students in an instructional setting seemed to be directly related to the concern of colleges for maximizing the amount students learn related to the amount of faculty effort available. This approach seemed to have more potential as a means of addressing a central concern Lombardi reported, increasing faculty productivity.

The study did not include a look at a crucial complement of hours in the classroom, adequate preparation time. Lawrence S. Sutton expressed concern that ignoring preparation time results in a one-sided view of productivity. In this study, it is presumed that the colleges, and the faculties will give full consideration to adequate preparation time.

Other areas of faculty productivity outside the classroom are also delimited from the study. Such areas of productivity are presumed to be considered in establishing the priorities for the colleges and/or the professional priorities of the individual faculty members.

Hours spent by full-time faculty members in classroom instructional situations was selected as the focal point of this study because of the widespread use of a lecture-type situation as the reference in policy statements quantifying workload. The workload policy at Cuyahoga Community College, in Cleveland, Ohio, illustrates this. It sets up a unit of faculty workload which is then used to quantify all faculty assignments in the college. Its unit of reference is the Equated Quarter Unit. At one time the college used "equated lecture hours" in assigning equitable workload among its full-time faculty members. When it developed a formal workload unit as part of policy, the following definition was approved.

The equated quarter unit (EQU) shall be the College-wide standard unit of measurement for calculating the direct instructional assignments of Teacher/Faculty Members based on the standard of a lecture presentation, wherein one lecture hour of class meeting per week equals one EQU per standard academic quarter, upon which all other instructional classification variations are based.

Of course, Cuyahoga Community College, like other multi-campus community colleges, has a wide variety of instructional assignments. Among them are the traditional lecture class assignment, an associated laboratory assignment, a possible discussion section assignment, and instructional assignments that take the faculty member out into the field. The traditional lecture approach may be replaced by a seminar or by a computer-based or television-based instructional system.

The relationships between the basic reference situation and all other instructional situations in a college is the problem of equitable distribution of workload among full-time faculty members, a problem not covered in this study.

The central question for this investigation was, then, to learn how many lecture-type hours of instruction per week would be assigned as a normal full-time faculty workload. The central question needed to be focused upon the normal assignment in the context of special lecture-type classroom instructional situations which were excluded from the survey:

- o writing classes or other classroom settings in which the number of students or the number of hours is exceptional in order to allow the teacher extra time for grading homework, critiquing creative work, or otherwise devoting exceptional amounts of time to students' work.
- o exceptionally large class sizes where special workload arrangements are made.
- o unusual instructional strategies are employed in the classroom which are recognized in special workload arrangements (courses by television, computer, and self-instructional programs which utilized classroom settings).
- o teaching in teams which are recognized with special workload arrangements.

Procedure

Given the focus of a single question, the procedure employed was direct and explicit. After a survey of the literature, and exploratory telephone conversations with the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC) and the ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, telephone calls were made to Academic Collective Bargaining Information Service, to the state administrators for two-year colleges, and/or to the chief academic officers of colleges directly. More than 70 officers cooperated in completing the study. The phone calls were made by a team of five callers.

The telephone survey approach was used because of the complexity of the subject. It was learned that many officers who deal with the subject are so deeply immersed in its complexities that to deal with the question of a single reference unit in terms of which other workload assignment conditions are quantified required a clarifying discussion, and some clarifying illustrations.

The list of offices contacted was taken from the 1979-80 AACJC Directory of Community, Junior and Technical Colleges.

Results

The 767 public two-year colleges covered in the survey included 19 with normal full-time faculty workloads consisting entirely of lecture-type instructional situations of less than 15 hours per week and 39 with more than 15 hours per week. These results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Number of Institutions by the Number of Lecture Hours
in the Normal Workload of Full-Time Faculty

Number of Weekly Lecture Hours	Number of Public Institutions
12	17
13.5	2
15	702
16	6
16.5	7
17	1
17.5	1
18	23
20	1
*NMF	7
Total	767

* NMF = No Meaningful Figure. Instructors are available to students for 40 hours of instruction per week.

Discussion

In preparing for this study, a variety of sources were found to indicate that 15 lecture-type hours per week would be the most common normal workload. An AACJC two-page report, "Faculty in Two-Year Colleges," stated that, "most faculty in two-year colleges teach from 12 to 17 hours per week, the average being 15 hours." (no date) The "Fall 1980 Salary Survey for the Illinois Public Community Colleges" (Kohl, 1980) showed that the Chicago Community College system is the only one among the Illinois Public Community Colleges where the normal full-time faculty lecture assignment is less than 15 hours per week.

John Thomason (1977) translated faculty workload into 15 credit hours in Texas, translatable, in turn, into 15 lecture hours, since a credit hour is awarded for a weekly lecture hour.

Similarly, the 15 semester hours in Florida reported by Lawrence S. Sutton (1976) relates to 15 lecture hours weekly. Mr. Sutton, investigating faculty workload for policy review at Central Florida Community College, conducted a series of telephone surveys in Florida and found that full-time faculty workloads averaged 15 semester hours, congruent with the State of Florida mandate that a full-time instructional load consist of 15 semester hours.

The results of this national telephone survey confirmed that the standard reference point of a lecture hour is a widely usable reference point for quantifying full-time faculty workload. Furthermore, the vast majority of public two-year colleges across the 48 states use 15 as the reference quantity.

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